

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 AID-20 OMB-01 PC-04 INRE-00 DRC-01

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O R 242306Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 3504

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SUBJ: ELECTION ANALYSIS

USCINCSO FOR J2

1. WITH ALMOST ALL VOTES COUNTED AND A BREAKDOWN AVAILABLE BY DEPARTMENT, WE ARE NOW IN A POSITION TO OFFER A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTIONS.

2. THE MOST STRIKING FEATURES OF THE ELECTION WERE THE HIGH ABSTENTION RATE, THE LOW CONSERVATIVE VOTE, THE VIRTUAL DEMISE OF ANAPO AND THE ABSOLUTE MAJORITY FOR THE LIBERALS THAT WILL GIVE THEM CLEAR CONTROL OF BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS.

3. THAT A SMALLER PERCENTAGE OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS SHOULD GO TO THE POLLS IN THIS, THE FIRST LIBERAL/CONSERVATIVE FACE-OFF IN NATIONAL ELECTIONS IN TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS, THAN IN 1970 IS A SOURCE OF SPECULATION AND WONDERMENT. THE LIBERAL VOTE WAS JUST ABOUT WHAT WE HAD ANTICIPATED, BUT CONSERVATIVES ABSTAINED

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IN LARGE NUMBERS AS DID ANAPISTAS. THE GREAT MASS THAT HAS NEVER

BOTED REMAINED OUT OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS AGAIN THIS YEAR.

4. WITH RESPECT TO THE CONSERVATIVES, WHAT SEEMS TO HAVE HAPPENED IS THAT GOMEZ' STRATEGY OF NOT PROVOKING THE LIBERALS INTO A MASSIVE TURNOUT WAS SUCCESSFUL, BUT WITH CONSERVATIVES, NOT LIBERALS. GOMEZ' COOL AND BLAND APPROACH LEFT CONSERVATIVES IN A DISTINCTLY APATHETIC MOOD. NOR DID GOMEZ' HOPES FOR AN OVERWHELMING RETURN OF CONSERVATIVE ANAPISTAS TO THEIR FORMER PARTY MATERIALIZE. RATHER THAN VOTE FOR EITHER GOMEZ OR THE ANAPO CANDIDATE, MRS MORENO, THEY STAYED HOME ON ELECTION DAY. IN COMPARING THE 74 AND 70 ELECTIONS, THERE IS A CLOSE CORRELATION IN MANY DEPARTMENTS BETWEEN THE DROP-OFF IN THE ANAPO VOTE FROM 70 AND THE DECREASE IN THE CONSERVATIVE VOTE. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORDOBA THE CONSERVATIVES (INCLUDING CONSERVATIVE

ANAPISTAS) RECEIVED 79,000 VOTES IN 70, OF WHICH 41,000 WENT TO ANAPO. IN 74, ANAPO RECEIVED 5,000 VOTES IN CORDOBA, DOWN 36,000 FROM 70. THE CONSERVATIVES WON 42,000, DOWN 35,000 FROM THE COMBINED CONSERVATIVE ANAPO TOTAL IN 70. THIS PATTERN WAS REPEATED THROUGHOUT THE NATION, ALTHOUGH IT DOES NOT HOLD IN EVERY INSTANCE.

5. ANOTHER FACTOR IN THE ROUTE OF THE CONSERVATIVES WAS THE INACTIVITY OF THE PROGRESSIVES IN THAT PARTY. THE LEADERS OF THAT GROUP, BELISARIO BETANCUR, A PROVEN VOTE GETTER, HERNAN JARAMILLO AND J. EMILIO VALDERRAMA, REMAINED ON THE SIDELINES THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN. THEIR FOLLOWERS WERE TREATED HARSHLY BY BERTHA DE OSPINA AND THE OLD LAREANISTAS AND RECEIVED POOR POSITION, OR NO POSITION, ON CONGRESSIONAL LISTS. IN THE WAKE OF DEFEAT THE RECRIMINATIONS WE ANTICIPATED IN BOGOTA A-51 OF MARCH 14, 1974 HAVE BEGUN AND THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY HAS ENTERED INTO WHAT PROMISES TO BE ITS MOST DIFFICULT PERIOD IN MANY YEARS.

6 THE LIBERALS WHO WENT TO THE POLLS SEEMED NOT SO MUCH INSPIRED BY LOPEZ, A MOST UNCHARISMATIC FIGURE, AS THEY WERE IMPELLED BY FEAR THAT GOMEZ MIGHT WIN. DESPITE GOMEZ EXPENSIVE EFFORT TO PRESENT HIMSELF AS A MAN OF PEACE (AN EFFORT THAT INCLUDED

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POSTERS SHOWING HIM HOLDING A DOVE), MANY VOTERS SAW IN HIM THE SPIRIT OF HIS FATHER, LAUREANO, AND HUSTLED TO THE POLLS TO VOTE AGAINST THE OLD MAN.

7. AS FOR ANAPO, THE MOVEMENT MAY WELL BE FINISHED AS A MAJOR OPPOSITION FORCE. THE FEW CONGRESSMEN ELECTED ON THE ANAPO TICKET PROBABLY WILL DRIFT BACK TO THEIR OLD PARTIES. MRS. MORENO HAS MADE BRAVE

STATEMENTS THAT SHE INTENDS TO KEEP THE ORGANIZATION TOGETHER AND PREPARE FOR 1978, BUT NO ONE BELIEVES HER. NOT ONLY DID SHE LOSE THE CONSERVATIVE ANAPO VOTE, BUT THE URBAN LIBERALS ON WHOM SHE COUNTED DECISIVELY REJECTED HER AND HER PARTY. THE PERSON MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ANAPO DEBACLE PROBABLY IS SENATOR SAMUEL MORENO DIAZ, THE CANDIDATE'S HUSBAND, A CORRUPT AND SINGULARLY UNINTELLIGENT POLITICIAN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, NATIONAL ELECTIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BOGOTA03504
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740096-1180
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740419/aaaaaqla.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <06 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ELECTION ANALYSIS USCINCSO FOR J2
TAGS: PINT, CO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005